

Wood and Judge Philip Gutierrez to be U.S. district judges. In neither case would my vote have altered the outcome of these confirmations; however, I wish to address these confirmations so that the people of the great State of Kansas, who elected me to serve them as U.S. Senator, may know my position.

Regarding vote No. 35, the confirmation vote on the nomination of Lisa Godbey Wood, of Georgia, to be United States District Judge for the Southern District of Georgia, Executive Calendar No. 6: I support the confirmation of Ms. Godbey Wood.

Regarding vote No. 36, the confirmation vote on the nomination of Philip S. Gutierrez, of California, to be United States District Judge for the Central District of California, Executive Calendar No. 7: I support the confirmation of Mr. Gutierrez.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO DENNIS MERRELL

• Mr. GRAHAM. Madam President, today I ask the Senate to join me in recognizing Dr. Dennis Merrell on the occasion of his retirement from York Technical College in Rock Hill, SC. Dr. Merrell officially stepped down last week as president of York Tech following over 30 years of service at the vocational college. For the last seventeen of those thirty years, Dr. Merrell led York Tech as the school's president. He leaves York Tech having transformed the college into a powerful source of economic development and manufacturing workforce creation for South Carolina and the country.

After serving 2 years in the military, Dr. Merrell earned a bachelor's degree in business and computer science from Winthrop University and a master's degree in computer science from Virginia Tech. He joined the faculty at York Tech to teach computer technology and programming in 1976 and in time became chair of the Computer Technology Division. Eventually Dr. Merrell was named the college's Vice President of Instruction. He served in that capacity until he was appointed president of the school in 1989 following the death of his predecessor, Dr. Baxter Hood.

To deliver true quality technical education, Dr. Merrell understood that York Tech would need to rely on resources outside of those provided by State and local government. To that end, Dr. Merrell developed a culture of industry partnerships from which the school has tremendously benefited during his tenure. Under Dr. Merrell's leadership, enrollment in the college's continuing education programs nearly doubled. Six buildings including a child development center, library, student services building, continuing education center, institute for manufacturing productivity, and science and technology building were all constructed on

Dr. Merrell's watch. Construction on a new economic development training center is also currently underway—the product of a collaboration with 3D Systems Corporation.

Like the relationship with 3D Systems, Dr. Merrell also championed partnerships with regional construction companies and other manufacturing businesses to address practical job-training issues. In the last year, York Tech has also joined with utility companies and contractors in the Carolinas to help meet the growing need for entry-level line workers in the region. For efforts like these York Tech was recognized as a Bellweather Awards Finalist in 2006 for its unique approach to industry alliances. The United States Department of Education has even acknowledged York Tech for its innovative approach to meeting the local and national workforce needs in the area of manufacturing.

Dr. Merrell even promoted distance learning, namely online instruction, allowing countless students the opportunity to reach educational goals without giving up their jobs. As such the American Association of Community Colleges named York Tech the number one digital-savvy college among the country's largest and urban community colleges.

Dr. Merrell's community service outside of his work at York Tech includes leadership roles at the Rock Hill and York County Economic Development Boards, the Rock Hill Rotary Board, the Charlotte Area Education Consortium Board, and the York County Red Cross Board, among a host of other technical education organizations.

York Tech is sure to miss Dr. Merrell's leadership and vision, but I am confident that the school will build on his impressive legacy. In conclusion, I ask that the Senate join me in wishing Dr. Merrell a healthy and happy retirement.●

IN RECOGNITION OF FLOWERS FOODS

• Mr. ISAKSON. Madam President, today I wish to recognize Flowers Foods of Thomasville, GA, which has just been named by *Forbes* magazine as this year's "Best-Managed" publicly traded food company. This honor comes on top of a record fourth quarter and a record year for Flowers Foods.

Flowers Foods has clearly set a standard of excellence for which all of us should strive. Operating out of Thomasville, GA, since 1919, Flowers Foods has a proven record of success and dedication not only to its customers and employees but also to the State of Georgia. I have watched as this company has grown over the years to the point where it now serves almost 40 percent of the U.S. population. I expect its continued success to serve as a shining example to businesses across Georgia and the United States.

I want to commend chief executive officer George E. Deese and all the em-

ployees of Flowers Foods and their families on a job well done.●

TRIBUTE TO RICHARD SHAPIRO

• Ms. MIKULSKI. Madam President, I join my colleagues in saluting Richard H. Shapiro, the executive director of the Congressional Management Foundation. As Rick moves on to new challenges, I want to thank him for his remarkable service to the U.S. Senate.

Rick Shapiro is responsible for bringing 21st century management skills to an institution built on 18th century rules and practices. We still have spittoons in the Senate—yet we also have blackberries.

Rick Shapiro helped us wrestle with issues that our Founding Fathers didn't even dream about. How do you answer thousands of e-mails a week? How do you hire, train, and retain excellent staff? How do you set goals and measure progress—so that promises made can be promises kept? How do you ensure that state and Washington offices communicate, coordinate and cooperate? Whenever I had a question about managing my office, I turned to Rick Shapiro—and my staff did the same.

Under Rick Shapiro's leadership, the Congressional Management Foundation has helped Members to set up their offices, upgrade office systems, and adjust to new ways of connecting with constituents. His book "Setting Course" is a must-read for all new Members of Congress. He was the first to compile and analyze information from individual offices—to enable Senators to learn from the best practices of others.

Rick Shapiro is a part of our Senate family. In fact, he met his wife Trudy Vincent when she was my legislative director. Their daughter Abby has been spotted selling Girl Scout cookies around the Capitol.

Rick Shapiro has made a lasting impact on the U.S. Senate. I ask my colleagues to join me in thanking him for his service. While he is stepping down from the Congressional Management Foundation, I look forward to great things from Rick in the years ahead.●

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Ms. Evans, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States submitting sundry nominations which were referred to the Committee on Armed Services.

(The nominations received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)